



# PROGRAM EVALUATION

*In order to measure whether the goals and objectives set forth in the Strategic Plan are being met, the FBI has developed a new multi-dimensional approach to evaluating its progress. There are three components of this new approach: field office reviews; inspections; and performance audits.*

## Field Office Reviews

For the first time, the FBI is requiring field offices to conduct standardized evaluative program reviews, the results of which are reported to FBI Headquarters on a semiannual basis. These reviews were designed by the Inspection Division in collaboration with the operational divisions and are based on enhanced performance metrics and improved performance assessment tools. The reviews are intended to strengthen field level implementation of the national strategic plan. They do so by examining the goals and objectives of each field office to ensure that they are compatible and consistent with national strategic goals and objectives, while also retaining some flexibility to meet the demands of the local communities they serve. More specifically, the reviews examine performance in the areas of program accomplishments, intelligence production, and utilization of resources.

Program managers at Headquarters analyze these evaluative field office reports and provide further feedback and direction, thereby strengthening national program management oversight and accountability through enhanced detection of performance anomalies and deficiencies. This enables the FBI to more proactively address resource and budget issues, identify best practices, and ensure a comprehensive assessment of our efforts to implement the Strategic Plan.

## Inspections

The second component is the FBI's internal inspection process. The Office of Inspections conducts rigorous on-site reviews of all field offices, Headquarters divisions, and Legats on a rotating basis every three years. These inspections encompass an office or division's performance in every aspect of operations and administration. They are intended to determine whether a division or office is performing effectively and efficiently, and to aggressively address

significant performance issues when they are discovered. Subsequent to each on-site visit, the inspection team provides instructions and recommendations to the entity being inspected, as well as to program managers, on ways to improve performance and ensure that there is sufficient compliance with rules, regulations, policies, and procedures. Each inspection also verifies information provided in the semi-annual field office reports and follows up on the findings and recommendations provided in internal and external performance audit reports. The results of inspections are reinforced by the Director through post-inspection reporting and follow up.

### Performance Audits

The third component of the FBI's efforts to evaluate its own progress is its internal performance audit capability. The FBI conducts comprehensive program evaluations on a regularly scheduled basis. These are independent and objective studies conducted by a dedicated office within the Inspection Division known as the Organizational Program Evaluation and Analysis Unit (OPEAU). Evaluation specialists from this office design and conduct performance audits of programs and activities in the FBI, using both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. Such research is intended to make judgments about programs or activities, and thereby inform decisions by management to change those programs or activities for the better. This information can be critical to ensuring that the FBI uses its limited resources in the most effective manner.

Authority for program evaluations derives from the Inspector General Act of 1978 and the Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) of 1993. During evaluations, the FBI adheres to the standards set forth in Government Auditing Standards, 2003 Revision (Yellow Book), published by GAO. These standards require FBI evaluation specialists to remain fully independent of the staffs of the programs under review. Evaluative studies are usually complex and multi-faceted, involving several organizational levels, processes, or functions throughout the Bureau, and can at times impact the entire organization.

The FBI has long had an internal evaluation capacity, but that capacity is now more firmly linked to its strategic planning and budget processes. The OMB has developed a new instrument for linking budget and performance in all federal programs entitled the Performance Assessment Rating Tool (PART). The PART is an accountability tool that helps government agencies focus on the results their programs produce. It does so by rating each program in four

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areas (program purpose & design, strategic planning, program management, and program results) and calculating a composite “score” using a 100-point scale. Two of the questions within PART, accounting for 11% of the overall score, ask whether “independent and objective” evaluations have been conducted. In order to serve the PART process, the FBI has revised its evaluation schedule and enhanced its evaluation capacity. Under this new approach, OPEAU recently completed an evaluation of the Cyber Program and is currently working on a study of the Criminal Justice Services Program. It is expected that the new approach will also better meet the needs of the Director and executive management as they transform the FBI to achieve its new mission responsibilities.

The FBI’s evaluation function augments the compliance audit function performed by the Office of Inspections. As part of the new reengineered inspection process, evaluation reports are provided to inspection teams prior to their on-site visits to assist them in identifying issues and concerns, and in turn, inspection data and findings are available to evaluation specialists as potential sources of information during the course of their research.

In addition to its own internal evaluation schedule, the FBI is also working cooperatively with the DOJ’s Office of Inspector General (OIG) and the GAO to cultivate a strong external evaluation capacity. Both the OIG and GAO have significantly expanded their performance audits of FBI programs and operations since 2001. As of June 2004, the OIG had 61 ongoing audits and the GAO had 80 ongoing audits. These external evaluations have done much to improve FBI administrative practices and investigative operations in a wide range of areas.